1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

The country houses of the Kûrds are for the most part—like those of their neighbours, the Armenians, already described—underground dwellings, with the cattle-stable communicating with the *selamlik*, or public-room. The cooking stove consists of an immense earthen jar, wider in the centre than at the top and bottom, which is sunk into the floor of the principal room. Into it a quantity of *tezek*, the native fuel of compressed straw and cow-dung, is thrown, and from an iron bar placed across the orifice a kettle is suspended by a chain. Over this stove the women sit, regardless of the smoke and flame issuing from the ground as from the crater of a volcano. The smoke finds its only exit by the little window high up in the wall, which admits the small modicum of light with which the inmates content themselves.

The furniture is very simple, being merely a few carpets and quilts, some mattresses, and a number of leather wallets, which contain the wearing apparel and other household goods not in general use. This apartment serves as kitchen, sitting- and sleeping-room combined, three or four generations finding rest and comfort within its four walls. Out of this room opens the store-room, which contains a cemented cistern, like an ancient sarcophagus in shape, and a number of earthen jars of different sizes, the largest quite four feet high, in shape like the Greek *amphora*. The cistern is used for making a kind of beer called *bâsa*, a liquor called *narâmâ*, extracted from the juice of the pomegranate, and other provisions for domestic

to pay the taxes in money for their tribesmen or clients, and in return demand a proportion, said to be often as high as 50%, of the crops. There is a constant struggle between the tax-assessor and the tax-payer, overestimation by the former and underestimation by the latter of the value in question. "If the rent of some land is 100 dinars," a landowner said, "the owner will tell the assessor it is only 50. No one pays taxes properly." It is for this reason that the investigation of economics by a disinterested observer is often difficult, for no one likes to reveal the true state of his finances, even to his most intimate friends.

There is in the serai an excise and customs director who must supervise the collection of duties from the customs points at Jindian, Rayat, and Hajji Umran on the Iranian frontier. The volume of trade between the district and Iran is not large, one of the most important imports being Iranian rice, and is probably but a fraction of its former magnitude. Thus the collection of customs duties, as well as the detection of smuggling (with the exception of arms and ammunition, a capital offense) cannot be said to constitute a great problem. The Tobacco Monopoly will be spoken of below, and locally the only excise problem seems to be the manufacture of bootleg arrack by the Nestorians, a violation which is most often winked at. A certain amount of charcoal is illegally produced in the district and smuggled south to Erbil and Kirkuk, but this is an

offense against a conservation law, because charcoal is not taxed. 314 656 372

The census officer and an assistant have an office in the serai, as has been mentioned above. The difficulties encountered in preparing a census for a district such as this are formidable, but administratively the task does not have the priority of others. The chief problem is simply the determination of the numbers of men and women in the district, itself a Herculean labor, and statistics in matters of births, deaths, marriages, and the like, are simply unknown. Because this is a new department, however, one might expect expansion in the future. 659

Finally, the serai houses the office of a civilian recruiting officer and his assistants whose task is the selection of recruits for the army. In Iraq every male must perform two years' military service after reaching the age of 18 years unless deferred for unfitness, pursuit of a higher education, or some other reason. There are four divisional commands to which recruits are sent for training and service, the transmission from Rowanduz being by lorry to Erbil. The Iraqi army, while equipped and organized on a British model, has little appeal for the poorer Arab or Kurdish youth, for the pay is almost nothing, the food reduced to bread and soup, and the regular enlisted personnel tyrannical. Thus, while the Kurds are noted for their love of arms and fighting, conscription is a joyless event in the poverty-stricken households, and 702 [703]

and distaff for spinning thread, and a number of metal kettles for dyeing the finished cloth a simple brown or blue. In the villages women do a certain amount of embroidery, for example, two flowered designs on a loosely-woven piece of cloth which can be cut out and stitched together to form a woman's cap, and of knitting, such as stockings in crudely dyed black and white yarn. Small, buff pottery jugs are fashioned without the wheel and daubed with designs in a red slip. There is a great deal of woodcarving, such as ladles, combs, bowls, cigarette-holders, and walking-sticks, some of which find their way out of the area to Erbil and even Baghdad. Save for a few pieces of carving, however, almost none of these products ever reach a larger market than that of Rowandus and bring only the smallest prices throughout the district. Women offer them for sale to the merchants in the hope of realizing a few coppers with which to buy trinkets, and some of these transactions, compared with agricultural or dairy produce, has great importance, either for merchant or for villager.

The collection of faggots and production of charcoal for winter fuel are important services performed by the villagers for the larger towns of the district. In the summer, blocks of mountain snow are in great demand in the town of Rowandus, particularly for chilling drinks such as sharbet or mastaw (a mixture of curdled milk, mast, and water, ab, drunk from a wooden bowl by means of a cumbersome wooden ladle), as well as large quantities of oak and willow branches which are constructed into summer arbors

a closet or booth, usually on the first floor of the house, with a door, as in the case of the bath, of wooden planks or a cloth hanging. This booth contains little more than a slit trench, perpendicular to the entrance, leading down into the foundations of the house and ultimately outside, and a metal ewer, a long-necked vessel with a capacity of about a pint, containing water. The left hand is used for cleansing, and, while never so stringently abhorred as among certain Arab groups, it is considered impolite to use it in formal dining, save in tearing apart food, although everyday practice admits considerable latitude. 514 [415] [515] 826 576

Interior lighting is furnished by fuel lamps. Before the first World War, a kerosene lantern, described as "Hungarian," was in use, imported together with its fuel from Russia through Iran. Since that time, a new and brighter type of lamp, making use of gasoline put under pressure by an attached pneumatic pumping device, has come into use in the wealthier homes. In a number of the poorer houses a small, simple oil lamp, which provides only a feeble glow, is utilized as an occasional night light. Save during Ramadan, when one or two meals are taken during the evening, most of the houses are completely darkened soon after nightfall. Heating during winter does not receive systematic attention, although the wealthy make use of kerosene stoves. The general remedy is to don additional clothing. The larger houses have a woodpile, 354 [439] [291] [372]

faggots supplied by the villagers, in their courtyard, but they are used as fuel for the kitchen rather than to obtain household warmth, and incidentally serve at night as roosts for the chickens. 354 372 [231]

Of the rooms of the house, those used for sleeping might be considered first, which also serve as apartments for the women, although there is nothing approaching the Ottoman notion of a harim with its guarded entrance and separate domestic facilities. These sleeping rooms have rectangular niches, several feet off the floor, cut into the outer walls whose thickness can accommodate them, which house the brightly-painted chests containing the clothing and goods of the house. A few niches may hold trinkets, mirrors, photographs, and the like. A number of the households have wooden or iron bedsteads in the European style, the latter imported from Erbil, but the greater part use wool or cotton mattresses spread directly on the floor with a bed of blankets and quilts made up on them. A variety of pillows and bolsters are in use, not only in these rooms, but elsewhere in the home. During the day the mattresses and their coverings are rolled up against the walls and serve as couches for those occupying the room. They may be unrolled after the noon meal for the short rest taken by many at this time. The floor itself is covered with mats, products of southern Iraq, or carpets, some of the latter beautiful examples of Iranian weaving. Other furniture, chairs or stools, is not uncommon, but is also 353 352 513 352 513 352

of the bowl, two or three. One product of the area is a 276
long wooden cigarette holder, cut from the thin branch of
a cherry tree and laboriously drilled, but it has little
more than curiosity value for the local people. European [439]
cigarette lighters are in great demand, and together with [293]
the dagger and the rosary form an important part in every
adult male's ensemble. There are several varieties of
these, and are Austrian in derivation. Several craftsmen [372]
in the town use flint and steel to light their pipes, but
this is relatively rare, a survival among the poor and
thrifty. Both men and women smoke, the latter as much as
their husbands, and there is no restriction on youngsters.
Children usually avoid tobacco as a matter of physical
distaste, not because of any prohibition laid upon them.
During the fasting hours of Ramadan it is considered im- [785]
polite, if not impious, to smoke on the streets, although [576]
tobacco, of course, has no mention in the Quran.

Almost all of the houses are infested with mice, but, 136
insofar as their inroads are not too intensive, they are
not regarded as a particular nuisance. Homes of the lower
classes, as well as the khan or hotel, are infested with
vermin of various types, of which the chief scourge is the
flea. Both flies and mosquitos are troublesome in the
summer months, and some effort is expended to keep them
from infants, but the greater number of adults pay little
attention to them. Scorpions and snakes sometimes turn
up, and are killed with the greatest possible dispatch.

4: Hanner E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

264 on a sheet of bread and gnawed. Spoons were sometimes used to eat from sauce bowls[66], but forks
362 and knives were not used[67]. Pieces of bread were used to eat with in addition to being consumed as
[412] food. The beverage drunk is *mastav* or the less-distinguished *dūg*. These are drunk from glasses if
[392] not drunk with a ladle from a common circulating bowl. Hands are washed before and after the meal.
[515] Water from a jug is poured over them down into a circular basin. After the meal the mouth is rinsed and cleaned.

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312 *Fetching of water.* Water is transported to the house by women in containers of various kinds:
415 clay jars about 0.40 m. high with a handle on the one side (E. 2239), home-manufactured and slightly
482 burnt, or rectangular petrol cans with an opening at the top on one side. Both are carried on the left
462 shoulder and supported by a raised right arm: there are also water skins, *kund*, made out of whole, tanned sheep or goatskins either carried across the woman's loins and held in place by the arms, or on the back in a big shawl, the ends of which are tied round the woman's chest. When a filled water skin of this type is to be placed on the back, the woman first places the shawl on the ground, then the water skin, and finally herself, lying on her back. She then ties the ends of the shawl, the one end being led over the right shoulder, the other under the left arm. Rising, she pushes the water skin into place before setting off. This is precisely the same procedure as is used when a woman places a corn stack on her back with the aid of a rope during the harvest.

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372 *Fuel supply.* Fuel is scarce and is utilised extremely effectively. In the cookhouse, both the clay-
354 lined sunken earth oven and the semicircular cooking pits bordered by low clay walls are fed with whole branches fetched from the mountains. In the villages there was also a transportable form of these cooking pits[68]. The fuel consumption of both the earth oven and the cooking pits is very slight, and the embers are carefully removed and placed in the samovar. Of other forms of fuel there are [739] cakes of animal manure kneaded with straw and dried on the walls of the clay houses[69]. Cattle manure is collected in the fields and pastures by the women. Charcoal, which is used for the low, flat ember pan, is a commercial commodity produced and sold by charcoal burners. Both in Sulaimani and in the villages there are petrol stoves to be found in bigger households, but in all these places fires and braziers are mainly used for cooking purposes.

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132 *Heating.* During the time I was in Kurdistan, from May to September, it was summer with temper-
374 atures of up to 50°C (122°F.), so I had no opportunity of studying the heating of houses in the colder periods of the year. One cool morning in Serkan, a village of some altitude, a fire was lit in a low niche in the wall under a lean-to. This was all I experienced in the way of heating. For further particulars I must quote the reports of other travellers. Hay[70] states that: "In winter the main room is heated by an open fireplace in the centre; the smoke passes out (or does not, as the case may be) by a hole in the middle of the roof". Soane[71] refers to: "... a brazier of charcoal", and that "a stool under a quilt ... formed the "kirsu" which is the Kurdish method of keeping oneself warm". Nikitine[72] writes that: "En hiver, pour dormir, on place au-dessus de foyer un tabouret *(kursi)*, on le recouvre d'une couverture[73] et tout le monde se couche dessous ...".

4: Hansen E-S (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

The churning sack is hung up on a beam in the coolhouse or on a hook in the wall just outside the way down to it. The clay sack is hung up in the door opening; later in the summer the supply for drinking runs out and water is drunk. Sacks with *mast* for cheese cake are hung up out of doors. The daily production of butter is stored in the storeroom. Butter is only used for cooking. The making of tea is always done by the daughter of the house, but in exceptional cases a young male relative may assist. Extra supplies of meat, cucumber and vegetables may be brought in by the men or sent by the local bus from Sulaimani.

Cooking is performed by the daughter of the home, but the food is prepared by the mother. Mother and daughter go out into the mountains together to pluck vine leaves in the vineyards of the house, and go together into the kitchen garden in front of the house to fetch vegetables (Topzawa). The daughters-in-law of the house go to the fruit garden to pick figs (Serkan). Water is found within the precincts of the house (Topzawa, Sargalu).

Water is fetched by the children or the servant girl. At Mirza Rustam it is fetched from the river by donkey and then emptied into petrol cans in the courtyard.

The collection of fuel in the mountains is performed by the maid servant of the house who has with her an axe with a crescent-shaped blade, and a donkey. Charcoal is fetched by men with donkeys (Topzawa). Washing-up is done by the servants. These can be either male (Sargalu, Serkan) or female.

The washing of clothes is done by the women of the house assisted by the servants—the same applies to ironing. Cleaning and bed-making is performed by all the women of the house in association.

To sum up: the activities that take place within the area of the house and those in its immediate neighbourhood, that is to say the kitchen garden, the orchard, vineyard etc. are attended to by the adult women of the village aristocracy assisted by the children and servants available, the work being distributed as in Europe.

The activities taking place outside the precincts of the home, such as milking the sheep and goats in the care of the village shepherd, are attended to by the servants of the house.

The ordinary village milieu. The baking of bread in the earth oven is undertaken simultaneously by several women from different homes. The earth oven can be placed outside the house. At Mirza Rustam there was one on an open space between the houses. In Balkha and other places where iron sheets were used instead of ovens, baking was done at home by the individual housewife alone.

The treatment of milk. The women go out into the mountains or to the mulberry plantations twice during the day to meet the shepherd. In Balkha the women took turns in giving each other the due quantity of milk. Churning was done in each home, the churning sack being suspended from a frame outside the house.

The making of tea could either be undertaken by women or by men.

Water was fetched in clay jars, petrol tins and goatskins from common water-basins far from the houses by women. It could be a constant and troublesome affair as at Balkha, where 3-4 goatskins had to be transported from the valley up to the village, the necessary water supply for 4-5 persons, or as in Mirza Rustam when water in petrol tins must be fetched from the river over 800 paces from the village houses.

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

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462
234
231
291
415

Fig. 39. Village women go out in the mountains to meet shepherd twice a day. Topzawa.

462 Fuel is collected in the mountains by women with axes and carried home on the back. Cattle dung
512 is collected in the mountains, kneaded with straw and dried into cakes on the wall of the house.
[312] The rinsing of rice takes place at the water basin from which water is fetched, often far from the
[482] home. Wheaten grain is ground in the house of a neighbour who owns a quern.

Cooking and washing up is done at home, whilst the washing of clothes takes place at the spring basin in small villages and at big, covered parochial basins in the larger ones, by all the women in [296] association. The clothes are laid out to dry at the same place. Beds are made by all the women of the [356] house working together. When the family slept on the roof the bedding remained there, but was rolled up during the day. An extra task at Balkha was the glazing of the roof with a mixture of clay and chalk; this was done collectively at the various homes in turn. To sum up: Apart from the cooking of [476] food and bed making, a great part of the domestic activities take place outside the home and are performed by the women of the village collectively. In Balkha the distribution of milk and the treatment of the roofs were also collective.